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February 2, 2021

Jesse Perkins, President
Members of the Board of Directors
Maine Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives
128 State Street
Suite 101
Augusta, ME 04330

To the MACCE Board of Directors:

Thank you for contacting me and taking the time to share examples detailing the continuing challenges small businesses face due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I appreciate your insight into the Maine business community and its needs.

I understand that the coronavirus crisis has been particularly hard on new businesses that have borne significant costs and incurred debt to open their doors in 2020. These businesses play a critical role in Maine's economy, and I will continue to work to provide them with the resources they need to safely reopen while protecting their customers and employees.

I am glad that you were pleased to see provisions in the December 2020 law that will help address the issues raised in your letter. As a co-author of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), I was proud to work with a bipartisan group of colleagues to help secure a much-needed extension of the PPP to reopen the application process for small business owners who have yet to apply and allow the hardest-hit small businesses to receive a second forgivable loan. The law also extended eligibility to small 501(c)(6) organizations and expanded forgivable overhead expenses to include supplier costs and investments in facility modifications and personal protective equipment needed to operate safely.

Last year in Maine, the PPP provided \$2.3 billion in forgivable loans to more than 28,000 small businesses, helping to sustain more than 250,000 jobs. So far in 2021, more than 4,600 small businesses in Maine have been approved for forgivable loans, totaling \$371 million.

As Congress considers additional relief measures, please know that I will keep your comments in mind. Should you have any questions about the PPP or other federal programs, [REDACTED] in my Bangor Constituent Service Center would be happy to assist you. She can be reached at [REDACTED]. Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator